621 These are the principal resources of the community
622 treasury, which is held and administered by the dugu-tigi with
651 the help and under the control of the fa. The dugu-tigi may
652 use the treasury to help him perform his duties honorably, to assist unfortunate or indigent members of the community, to receive the guests of the community in a suitable manner, and to meet emergencies.

[661] Under no circumstances does this treasury constitute any part of the personal fortune of the dugu-tigi. Only usurpation, which is fairly common under various guises, alters this state of affairs. In the same way, it is not uncommon for this wealth to be divided in some measure among the members of the council, who in one way or another appropriate it. Such abuses, no matter how common, do not in the least alter the principle that legally such wealth is and remains exclusively the property of the community. [234]

Chapter 4

Brotherhoods

1. The End of Childhood

794 General considerations. The cult of the ancestors and of
881 the nyana dugu-da-siri are not enough for the Bambara in his efforts to make sure of the protection, help, and services of the invisible world. The magician has created for him some renowned protectors or servitors which are powerful and formidable: the nyana of the boli.

The cult of these gods gives rise to spiritual families whose members are so closely linked by the bonds of fraternity that we may safely say that these groupings are brotherhoods. All these brotherhoods share the common characteristic that no one can be received into them before having submitted to a certain rite called soli (1) or bolo-ko (1), terms which

1. Soli is the word for the action of piercing, emerging, laying an egg, or

608 [59] No one may oppose the Fama's will, except his sénanku
643 who has the power to stay the chief's decisions, particularly in case of acts dictated by anger: murders, wars, etc.

The Fama's resources came from the work of his familiars,
643 from a levy on wild foodstuffs, half of the war booty, all otherwise
651 unowned goods, from certain precious substances, such as gold and
652 ivory, from taking part of every animal killed in the hunt and the skins of all wild animals brought down, all receipts for the right to hold markets, for grazing, and for changing pastures, tolls for river crossings, fines, and from the sale of prisoners of the law. On the other hand, he had to meet the following expenses: to feed and clothe the members of the community in the case of need;to maintain the warriors (give them a groom, a wife, a rifle, a horse); bestow favors on people of caste, feed them, clothe them, arrange for their marriages if need be; make offerings to charity; receive strangers; feed prisoners detained for judgment or otherwise held.

643 The Fama ordered all work of common interest: construction
653 and maintenance of fortifications, clearing trails, preservation of springs, construction and upkeep of the mosque if one was needed, making pirogues for common use, setting up rest platforms.

These works were carried out through payments in labor. The work was divided up among the villages by the Fama, and the village chiefs in turn assigned it to family heads. He who did not carry it out in person could have it done by members of his family; he who refused could be obliged to comply by force.

642 Bambara society rarely achieved a systematic and centralized form of organization analogous to our European kingdoms. What has been dignified with the name of "empire" was scarcely more than an organization which reflected the attraction exercised by a family, by reason of its prestige or its power, on groupings which accepted its suzerainty. As Monteil has shown very well, a family's effort at domination has always been directed at groupings of people and not at territorial expansion.

642 The whole of these groupings constitutes the Ton. This in-
565 cludes:

1. a chief, the ton-tigi;
2. the local chiefs, fa;

423 621 622 Thus, the man holding the land can neither sell it nor take any action regarding it which would involve the interests of the whole community; but he can rent it out, pledge it, or [62] cede it, which leads to manifold disputes at the time of redistribution of the land in the case of cyclical cultures.

621 622 652 The dugu-tigi also prepares the community's budget. The resources include: gifts made to the gods, thanksgiving offerings for the hunt, for the fishing catch, and for the millet harvest, payments for concession of land or for services rendered, rent of community goods (fixed revenues or exceptional tribute), receipts from fines, confiscations, escheatage, and finally, the extraordinary aid formerly obtained for war, constructions, etc.

[65] 746 Among the expenditures are included the cost of supporting members of the community if need be, of maintaining the proper appearance, assistance to the sick, and, especially, the tax or tribute formerly paid to the sovereign, legitimate or not, and today paid to the French administration.

596 The family patrimony (tien) is administered by the fa, head of the family. A. Aubert (1) gives us the composition of this

1. A. Aubert, Coutume bambara (cercle de Bougouni) [Bambara Custom (Bougouni Circle)].

patrimony which includes: "Rights on the lands cultivated by the community; animals; serfs; money owed and money owing; the dowries of the daughters and women who are issue of members of the settlement; the inheritances; the dwellings of the settlement and their furnishings; the foodstuffs of the communal granaries (foro-ba), and, in general, all wealth resulting from the communal work of the family members."

Moreover, the fa must: "see to the material life of all the members of the family; provide dowries for the women of the community; pay back the dowries of the women of the community who are to be divorced; ransom members of the family who are taken prisoner or are sold, and pay taxes in goods or in money."